

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An armed suture, comprising:

a needle having first and second opposed ends and a blind hole formed in said first end and extending longitudinally into said needle from said first end thereof, said hole including an upper edge, a sidewall, ~~and~~ a bottom wall disposed at a location intermediate said opposed ends and a length measured between said upper edge and said bottom wall, said hole having a first diameter at a first location proximate said upper edge ~~first end~~ and a second diameter at a second location proximate said bottom wall, ~~distal to said first end and distal to said first diameter~~, said second diameter being greater than said first diameter;

a suture having an end thereof ~~inserted into~~ positioned in said hole and extending along said length thereof so as to terminate proximate said bottom wall, said end of said suture having a third diameter, wherein said first diameter is greater than said third diameter by a factor that allows said hole to accommodate the insertion of a range of differently-sized sutures therein;

an adhesive having a viscosity, when uncured, permitting said suture to be inserted into said hole, and said adhesive, when cured, forming an annular mass that

~~extending from said first end to said bottom wall of said hole and substantially~~
~~surrounding~~ surrounds said end of said suture along said length of within said hole, so
as to be in continuous contact with said sidewall along said length, ~~and said adhesive,~~
~~when cured, bonding said suture to said needle within said hole by way of~~ said annular
adhesive mass having an outer diameter that is greater at said second location than at
said first location, so as to form a mechanical interlock therewith between said suture
and said hole; and

means, located in said hole, for increasing the bond between said
adhesive and said hole.

2. (Original) The armed suture of claim 1, wherein said adhesive is
curable by exposure to electromagnetic radiation.

3. (Original) The armed suture of claim 2, wherein said electromagnetic
radiation is UV light.

4. (Original) The armed suture of claim 3, wherein said adhesive is
cyanoacrylate.

5. (Original) The armed suture of claim 2, wherein said adhesive is
curable by a second curative agent.

6. (Original) The armed suture of claim 5, wherein said second curative
agent is a compound.

7. (Original) The armed suture of claim 5, wherein said second curative agent is water.

8. (Original) The armed suture of claim 5, wherein said second curative agent is heat.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) The armed suture of claim 1, wherein said first diameter and said third diameter are selected such that there is an annular space between said first end of said needle and said suture, said annular space having a length substantially the same as said length of said hole, and wherein said ~~first end is swaged inwardly without eliminating said~~ annular space is dimensioned to receive said annular mass therein between said first end and said suture.

11. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 1, wherein said hole is formed by laser drilling.

12. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 1, wherein said hole is unpolished.

13. (Withdrawn) The armed suture of claim 1 wherein said suture hole has at least one groove having an orientation with a component of extension perpendicular to an axial direction of said suture hole.

14. (Original) The armed suture of claim 1, wherein said suture is monofilament.

15. (Withdrawn) A method of making armed sutures, comprising the steps of:

(A) forming a needle hole in an end of a needle;

(B) applying an adhesive between an end of the suture and the needle hole;

(C) inserting a suture into the needle hole

(D) allowing the adhesive to at least partially cure.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, further including a step of metering the adhesive onto the suture hole prior to said step of inserting.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16, further comprising a step of secondarily curing the adhesive.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 17, wherein said step of secondarily curing is performed by exposure to at least one of a chemical curative and heat.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the chemical curative is applied to the suture hole prior to said step of applying.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein said step of applying includes dipping an end of the suture into the adhesive prior to the step of inserting.

21. (Withdrawn) The armed suture of claim 1, wherein said bond increasing means includes a groove formed in said hole.

22. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 1, wherein said bond increasing means includes a roughened portion of said sidewall.

23. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 22, wherein said roughened portion is reamed.

24. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 22, wherein said roughened portion is laser drilled.

25. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 22, wherein said roughened portion is etched.

26. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 22, wherein said roughened portion includes a conical tip.

27. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 1, further comprising a catalyst disposed within said hole.

28. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 27, wherein said catalyst is disposed between said sidewall and said adhesive.

29. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 27, wherein said catalyst is cyanoacrylate.

30. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of claim 1, wherein said bottom wall has a substantially conical shape.

31. (Previously Presented) The armed suture of Claim 1, wherein said hole is bottle-shaped and said mechanical interlock is bottle-shaped.

32-34. (Cancelled)